

BREAKING THE HEAT

for days now
i have been listening
to the birds and the dogs of summer

it will rain soon
this has been mentioned
through the static voice of the radio

the man across the street
has been watering the same piece of lawn
for as long as i can remember

green is stubborn under his feet
the birds that come nearer to him
have grown darker and larger

through the heavy of sleep
i have a plausible dream
about the mailman weeping with
great personal tragedy
when i hand him a heavy letter

cloud rumors are lying
in grey lumps in the sky
the trees are discussing this and
telling it to the curtains

there is one curse of thunder far away
and everything goes flat again
against the day

TO THE PEDESTRIANS

the beast in the field
moves like grasses
only his shape shows
made of pale ripple
and the subtle growl of the wind

there is broken glass at his feet
heaven knows he is hungry
but he is superstitious and
just lies there
waiting for luck to feed him

he is tame
but children come to ride his back
and look out at the sidewalk
with wild death in their eyes

every night the shape sighs down
into purple dream
his outline breathing against the sky
(!) do not take
shortcuts then

FROM THE GARDEN

what can i give you
if not food
great sacks of produce
picked from summer

words cannot do

"can't live on words" you say
with one hand around
a black eggplant
the other holding
the biggest zucchini we could find

"this one's for laughter" i said
but you didn't even smile
(your eyes that hungry)
though you did manage "thank you"

well, the sun hangs in silence now
behind the difficult weather
behind the gray polluted sea of sky
large green tomatoes
hang heavily into September

the fair crowd wore sweaters again
the fireworks at night
sputtered into half-hearted patterns

we had beet tops for dinner
strips of carrots
fried green tomato slices
late radishes
and a twelve-ounce package of wieners
that cost over a dollar

WEED BUFFALO

outside in the rain
the weed buffalo
is lying in the field
asleep or patient
waiting for
another quirk of imagination
to free him